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## LATIN CLUB LUNCHEON

Nineteenth Meeting of the Latin Club—Nov 10, 1906

Mr J Edmund Barss of The Hotchkiss School will address the club on the subject: "The Teaching of Latin Prose Composition", at the Hotel Marlborough, Thirty-sixth Street and Broadway, New York City. We shall sit down promptly at 12 M. Seats will be reserved for those holding tickets (see announcement regarding tickets on p 3), others should be sure to notify THE LATIN LEAFLET, 179 Marcy Ave, Brooklyn, by postal card, if intending to be present. ATTEND TO THIS MATTER NOW.

## A TRIP THROUGH GREECE

The following abstracts from a letter of a friend, a classical scholar and student of religion, while not presenting absolutely new views, are written with such a candor and such an independent judgment, that it may interest even those who, like the editor, do not agree with the writer's views.

From Vienna I went by way of Pesth to Constantinople. It was a desperately exhausting journey. All impressions of the city, at least the first day, came to a soul unreceptive and melancholy, but the second day was better. Everything in Constantinople is one wild confusion. The variety may be all right for the artist, but it is an unspeakable torture for the analyzing scholar. Seen from a distance, the picture is less loud, less dirty, less confused than from nearby, but it is as beautiful as Hamburg, or even more so. On the second day I visited the mosques: an overpowering impression, and a feeling of being surrounded by infinite space, space suggestive almost of personality. It is true, the Turks deserve little credit for it, for their greatest architect was an Armenian, and the whole style is inherited. But to-day this utter disregard for space is as impressive as if it came directly from the Old Testament. But I suppose that the splendor of the Byzantine court is to be considered as its source. I also witnessed divine service. Reverential inclinations of the body genuflexions, prostrations form the larger part of the ritual. Their devotion does not permit any singing, their divines recite their Quran verses in a sort of nasal chant; the Christian anthem is something

quite different, lifting one on pinions as it were. The fayences of the mosques are beautiful, the older ones Persian, mostly white and blue. In spite of their minute patterns they are very impressive, and on account of their enormous number they have a splendid lustrous color effect. At my departure I had a last overwhelming view of the city.

The Sea of Marmora is monotonous. The following morning I awoke in the Aegaeon. The deep blue of the water, even the lighter and more transparent hue at the bow was a new impression, something never experienced before. But it remained a soulless fact, for the islands which limit the view are so desolate and rocky that one nowhere has the feeling of life, and even the high sounding names, Andros, Ceos, Euboea, do not change this impression. The ruins of the temple at Sunion can be seen quite plainly, but after the mosques one has at first little appreciation for this bric-a-brac kind of delicacy. At five o'clock in the afternoon we disembarked in the Piraeus, where the simian vivacity and obtrusiveness of the natives makes itself disagreeably felt. I rejoiced in the anticipation of the comforts of a decent hotel and of a night's rest, for there was no sleep to be had on board the steamer. On the road to the city much is to be seen, the Acropolis from nearby, also the Olympieion—really imposing, but uninspiring. The dragoman, seated at your side in the carriage, shows you the things which in reality are not one whit more charming than they are in photographs, and you feign interest in order not to appear impolite. But, of course, in my scholarly abhorrence of the "Realia" I never had had a clear vision of an ancient city with its ever recurring features, such as e g Luebeck gives one for the medieval towns. There is also missing here that which makes matters in the North so attractive, the double veil of an all-covering vegetation and of the cloudy damp weather which covers everything. Still, even with the simplest medieval village church we all are connected, without the conscious labor of realization, by more or less strong bonds. It is alive; but in the Parthenon and in Aegina there are no longer ritual and liturgy. These places are dead.

After a survey of the Acropolis, several visits to the National Museum and an excursion to Eleusis, I went to Crete. The passage was rough. The first sight of the island, as you approach it, is grandiose. But here too the things of real interest are those that are modern. I also visited the south of the island,

in a horseback ride of nine hours' duration to Hagia Deka (near Gortyna), then to Hagia Triada and Phaestus with its palace ruins excavated by the Italians. There and back in a terrific rainstorm, in ten hours. Unfortunately I was seized with malaria just as I started to visit the ruins, so that I had to lean on the dragoman to keep on my feet. My impressions of the place, therefore, are without value. Back to Herakleia-Candia, the starting point, again nine hours in the pouring rain on abominable roads. The remains of antiquity are the part which interests least, and is most easily forgotten. But, oh, the glorious spring flowers, the fresh brave men, the patient saddle horse, the mighty mountains. Here, as everywhere, the sport of traveling, the roughing it was the real charm of the trip. An hour's ride from Candia brought me to Knossos, where Arthur Evans showed me the enormous expanse of ruins. These monarchical civilizations give one much pleasure. The specialization in the use of the rooms, even to the most modern comforts, shows that all this is the result of a prolonged development, and the same is shown, as you know, by the vases.

The return trip to the Piraeus was again rough. But in spite of the Cretan hardships I could not rest long. At an impossibly early hour I left Athens one Sunday morning for Corinth, where are to be seen, besides the pillars of the temple, the results of painstaking American excavations, among them the remains of fountains, etc. Acrocorinth is seen from afar, and gives the impression of a huge hat. A beautiful view may be had from the top, it is said, but a fine mist obscured everything. At the foot of the rock where Corinth was situated—finally destroyed by an earthquake—there is now an Albanian village. How infinitely more pleasant are the Albanians than the Greeks!

The next day I embarked for Itea, the port of Delphi, where I spent the night. The following day we started for Delphi, at first through a plain covered with olive trees, the ground often literally hidden by red and white anemones. We had a carriage; the good road ascended slowly, often affording a view across the Gulf of Corinth to the snow covered mountains north of Arcadia. A taste trained by Alpine scenery must revel in this view, although the ancient Greeks probably felt hardly any emotion at the sight. On entering the valley of the Pleistos the sea is lost to view. The valley itself reminded me of the hill country in Central Germany, but of course it is without any trees. In the miserable village of Kastri we took rooms equally miserable. After a walk of about ten minutes one faces the gentle slope where the *temenos* of Apollo once stood. In spite of the heat I tried to see everything of interest, including the museum with its bronze statue of a charioteer, and many other things that challenge combination

and thereby become interesting. But only a hypersensitive person can claim to feel aesthetic pleasure before these remains. On the whole, however, Delphi is an inexhaustible mine; the excavations have been done well. I clambered about till dusk, trying to decipher inscriptions in situ, and every corner recalled to me ritual and cult. Even later, at night, I reveled in my dreams in the conjuring up of these ghosts of the past. That was caused, first of all by Euripides's *Ion*, secondly by the detailed study of the place, and lastly, because there were so few Greeks to be seen there. How we should enjoy the place if all the parasite population of Delphi could be resurrected. Especially in the age towards whose close Pindar lived Delphi must have been great, much greater than in the age of elegant treasures. I am glad that I know my Euripides and Pindar well, and that I have been in Delphi.

*Ion* was followed by the Bacchides: I wanted to see the Corycian cave, wanted, after all the well regulated hierarchy of the city on the Pleistos, to see an open spot, where once upon a time the orgies were celebrated. It was a long ride; we came to the foot hills of Mt. Parnassos, where the coniferae are no longer so dwarfed and stunted, but approach somewhat in beauty their proud northern brethren. Here there was some vegetation at least. To reach the cave itself, we had to climb with great exertion: I can hardly understand how the women celebrants were able to leap over all the scattered rocks.

The following night we spent in Arachova; from there we went to Daulos, across the Schiste, where Oedipus slew his father. The old old tales from the class room appear less musty; but does it really pay to drag them violently from their death-slumber? Daulos too has its orgiastic memories; late in the afternoon I clambered up to the acropolis, and was almost blown off by the gale. The following day we rode to Chaeronea, admired the famous lion, and gained some conception of the meaning to the Athenians of Philip's occupation of Elatea, and of the whole Phocian-Boeotian plain, where almost every spot is connected with legend. Then back to Athens.

At the end of the week I went to Aegina, up to the mountain where formerly Zeus Panhellenios was worshipped. On the road we had glorious views in every direction, especially towards the Peloponnesus. From there in a long ride, first on miserable roads, then through splendid woods filled with the most beautiful spring flowers, to the temple of Athena. I saw the temple in the light of a glorious moon, and was filled with admiration. Of course, these effects are foreign to the building itself, and surely the whole would have appeared not charming, but unpleasant were the cella still standing. It is the moonlight streaming through the pillars which gives to the ruins their attractive, almost medieval character—not architectonic but picturesque. But, what I had missed in Kolonos, whither I had gone one afternoon from Athens in company of the Oedipus Coloneus—the holy grove in which you may expect to meet almost any god—that I saw realized in Aegina.

PAUL RUBEN, LONDON